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SUBJECT: SEOUL - PRESS BULLETIN; June 26, 2009

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People Help His Administration Regain Public Support?

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Police Carrying Out 100-Day Operation  
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ROKG Raises 2009 Growth Target to minus 1.5 Percent  
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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

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According to the AP, President Barack Obama, on June 24, extended a  
set of economic sanctions against North Korea for another year  
"because the existence and risk of the proliferation of  
weapons-usable fissile material on the Korean Peninsula continue to  
pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security  
and foreign policy of the United States." (JoongAng, Hankook, Segye,  
Seoul, all TVs)

China, via a June 25 press briefing by its Foreign Ministry spokesman, made clear its intention to continue aid to North Korea, an indirect rejection of U.S. requests for China to participate proactively in sanctioning the North. (Chosun)

Pentagon Press Secretary Geoff Morrell, in a June 24 regular briefing, said that the U.S. is closely monitoring "multiple" North Korean ships suspected of carrying weapons of mass destruction, in addition to the North Korean ship, Kang Nam, that the U.S. has been tracking since last week. (Chosun, Hankook, Segye, Seoul, KBS)

In a related development, a former Myanmar intelligence officer, in a June 25 interview with Radio Free Asia (RFA), said that there is a high possibility that the Kang Nam is headed toward Myanmar carrying weapons to swap for food. (Chosun)

On the 59th anniversary of the outbreak of the Korean War yesterday, North Korea threatened to launch a nuclear attack on the ROK. The Rodong Shinmun, the official daily of the North Korean Workers' Party, said in a commentary: "(President Barack Obama's assurance of "extended deterrence" against the North during his June 16 summit with President Lee) helps us further justify our ownership of nuclear deterrence and could result in a disastrous situation of nuclear revenge against the ROK in the event of war." (Dong-a)

#### MEDIA ANALYSIS

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#### -N. Korea

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Most ROK media gave wide attention to President Barack Obama's June 24 decision to extend a set of economic sanctions against North Korea for another year. The media reported that President Obama said in a statement to Congress that he acted "because the existence and risk of the proliferation of weapons-usable fissile material on the Korean Peninsula continue to pose an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States."

Most media also reported that the U.S. is closely monitoring "multiple" North Korean ships suspected of carrying weapons of mass destruction, in addition to the North Korean ship, Kang Nam, that the U.S. has been tracking since last week. Pentagon Press Secretary Geoff Morrell was widely quoted as saying in a June 24 regular briefing: "We have been interested in this one ship (the Kang Nam), but we've been interested in, frankly, multiple ships."

In a related development, conservative Chosun Ilbo cited a former Myanmar intelligence officer as saying in a June 25 interview with Radio Free Asia (RFA) that there is a high possibility that the Kang Nam is headed toward Myanmar carrying weapons to swap for food.

Conservative Chosun also carried a front-page report from Washington that China made its intention to continue aid to North Korea clear. The report quoted Chinese Foreign Ministry Spokesman Qin Gang as saying in a June 25 regular briefing: "Measures related to North Korea should not affect either the livelihood of the North Korean people nor their normal economic and trading activities." Chosun interpreted this as China's indirect rejection of U.S. requests to participate proactively in sanctioning the North.

#### FEATURES

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U.S. EMBASSY TO PRESENT OBAMA'S "THE AUDACITY OF HOPE" TO EACH ROK LAWMAKER AS A GIFT  
(Dong-a Ilbo, June 26, page 2)

By Reporter Cho Su-jin

As a rare occasion, the U.S. Embassy in the ROK will donate 350

copies (of "The Audacity of Hope") to the National Assembly.

On June 29, the U.S. Embassy in the ROK will donate 350 copies of U.S. President Obama's "The Audacity of Hope" to the National Assembly. These books will be given as a gift to all (ROK) lawmakers - currently numbering 296 - and National Assembly officials.

A U.S. Embassy official said on June 25 that it is very unusual for a U.S. Embassy to present a U.S. president's book as a gift to a National Assembly or lawmakers from a certain country. The official added that the U.S. Embassy decided to give the (ROK) lawmakers a version of the book translated into Korean instead of the original work (in English) for the convenience (of the lawmakers.)

Purportedly, it was Dong-a Ilbo's report that prompted the U.S. Embassy to present Obama's book to ROK lawmakers. In an April 2009 report, Dong-a Ilbo provided a list of the most popular books that lawmakers had borrowed from the National Assembly Library in the last 10 months since the opening of the 18th National Assembly. In this report, President Obama's "The Audacity of Hope" topped the list.

It added that five books about President Obama - "Barack Obama, the New Face of America" and "Barack Obama: Speeches 2002-2006" (tied-7th), "Hopes and Dreams: The Story of Barack Obama" (15th) and "Humane, So Humane Barack Obama" (20th) - were among the most borrowed books.

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After reading this story, the U.S. Embassy reportedly came up with the idea of presenting copies of the President's book to lawmakers so that they would not have to go through the inconvenience of "borrowing" the book, and reported the idea to officials in the U.S.

A diplomatic source said, "When Embassy officials visited Washington for the ROK-U.S. summit in (mid-June), they reported the Embassy's decision to present ROK lawmakers with "The Audacity of Hope," along with a copy of the Dong-a Ilbo story, to President Obama through White House officials."

Meanwhile, at the latest summit, President Obama presented President Lee Myung-bak with two books on 32nd U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal policies and vision for the U.S. reconstruction, "Looking Forward" and "On Our Way."

STEPHENS